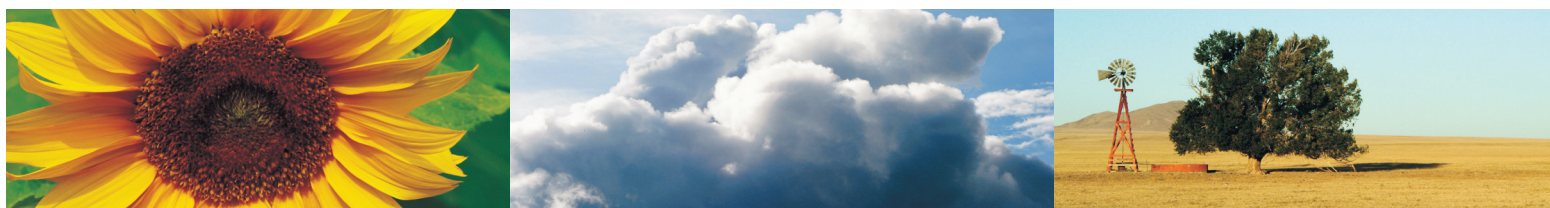


2010 Environmental Excellence Award Winners Demonstrate Take Care of Texas Spirit



The Texas Environmental Excellence Awards honor select Texans each year for their exceptional efforts to protect our natural resources. Since 1993, the program has highlighted the most outstanding pollution prevention and waste reduction projects in the state. All award recipients have two things in common—they exemplify the Take Care of Texas spirit and they enhance the TCEQ's efforts to protect our state's human and natural resources while ensuring clean air, clean water, and the safe management of waste.

Winners of the 2010 Texas Environmental Excellence Awards—recommended by the Governor's Blue Ribbon Committee and approved by the Office of the Governor and Governor Perry—were honored at an awards banquet during the Environmental Trade Fair and Conference held at the Austin Convention Center on May 5.

Some of the winners are highlighted below. Be sure to check back next month to learn about more winners! For more information on any of the projects, visit www.teea.org.

YOUTH

Miss Sarah Jo Lambert, Lubbock

In addition to her active school schedule as a high school sophomore, Sarah Jo Lambert took time to help design and construct an 800-square-foot environmental center at Camp Rio Blanco in Crosbyton—the Girl Scout camp she's attended the past eleven years. The center, Lorax Lodge, whose name Sarah Jo picked from a Dr. Seuss children's book, serves to educate campers and visitors on green-building practices and on reducing their environmental impact. In addition to donating more than 600 hours of personal time, Sarah Jo recruited more

than 2,200 volunteers and sponsors, who made contributions or in-kind donations totaling over \$230,000.

To provide environmental teaching opportunities to area educators and lodge visitors, Sarah Jo developed an environmental curriculum guide for kindergarteners through twelfth-graders. She also mapped a nature trail at the camp, identifying plants and wildlife.

EDUCATION

City of Waco, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Baylor University

When the City of Waco looked to safeguard the community's dependable water supply, it increased Lake Waco by seven feet, providing an additional 20,000 acre-feet of water. However, raising the level also inundated surrounding habitat, which spurred the city to approve development of a 180-acre constructed wetlands known as the Lake Waco Wetlands—now home to a variety of aquatic and terrestrial plants, mammals, birds, insects, amphibians, and reptiles.

In 2004, the Wetlands added a research and education center to serve as a living laboratory. As the only wetlands with public access in a 60-mile radius, Lake Waco Wetlands acts as the hub for science-based activities to three major colleges and universities and more than 24 independent school districts.

Baylor University, with the support and cooperation of the City of Waco and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, initiated an innovative approach to environmental education at the Wetlands through a cooperative "GEAR UP" grant. GEAR UP Waco aims to increase the number of low-income students prepared for meaningful interaction with colleges and universities. It engages students in a hands-on curriculum spanning sixth through twelfth grades.

GEAR UP's Marsh Madness program reinforces core biology concepts aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum, making it the only outdoor learning lab in Central Texas with TEKS-aligned curriculum.

WATER CONSERVATION

Tarrant Regional Water District, Fort Worth

As a water supply wholesaler for the area, TRWD provides service to more than 70 water user groups, including the cities of Fort Worth, Arlington, Mansfield, and the Trinity River Authority. In an effort to develop a unified water conservation message for North Texas, TRWD approached Dallas Water Utilities (DWU) in 2007 about using DWU's existing campaign tagline, "Save Water. Nothing Can Replace It." for the District's own collaborative campaign. Since then, TRWD's water conservation campaign has continued to grow, using comprehensive multimedia strategies to reach citizens of North Texas—who make up approximately 20 percent of the state's entire population.

By implementing strategies such as not watering between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., consumer water use declined throughout the past two years, despite a growth in population. Since the campaign began, water use among the district's primary customers has declined by more than 36.2 million gallons a day, saving a total of 13.2 billion gallons of water.



Clean Texas Bronze Member Jamak Fabrication Saves Big!

Jamak Fabrication, a Weatherford-based manufacturing company specializing in silicon rubber, has been a Bronze-level Clean Texas member since 2002. The company's goal—to keep



"a constant focus on what we can do to be more efficient, have lower costs, and be less reliant on scarce commodities"—is right in line with what being an environmental leader, and a Clean Texas member, is all about.

Jamak Fabrication saved big by changing its handling of leftover materials. As is the case with most manufacturing companies, there are sometimes products that do not meet the customer's needs, and these materials often end up in the landfill. To address this issue, Jamak began asset recovery

efforts in 2005. By 2009, staff members had diverted 1.7 million pounds of material from the landfill, saving the company \$486,000.

Jamak Fabrication also found a way to save money and reduce its environmental impact by improving its process of manufacturing wind-shield wipers. After thorough research, the company developed a manufacturing method that reduced the use of expensive adhesive and methanol by approximately 85 percent. This new process is now saving Jamak Fabrication \$20,750 a year.

For more information about the Clean Texas Program or becoming a member, visit <www.cleantexas.org>.

GOVERNMENT

Waco Metropolitan Area Regional Sewerage System

The Waco Metropolitan Area Regional Sewerage System (WMARSS) wastewater treatment plant launched an initiative in 2002 to reduce and manage its energy usage in a way that benefits the environment and saves money. The plant, which treats up to 37.8 million gallons of municipal wastes from seven member cities each day, has been systematically increasing the efficiency of its equipment and processes over the past eight years. So far, the efforts have yielded a 35 percent average reduction in annual energy usage.



WMARSS also found a way to turn some of its waste into a product—energy. In 2006, the site developed an industrial receiving station capable of accepting fats, oils, grease, and high-strength organic wastes. The station allows the plant to produce more methane gas and convert it to electricity. This biogenerated electricity now satisfies 33 percent of the plant's overall electricity needs—decreasing its reliance on natural gas.

To further benefit the community, WMARSS is working with the Waco Chamber of Commerce to promote waste-to-energy initiatives, and it routinely provides educational tours to area schools, colleges, and civic organizations.

*a constant focus
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Keep Texas Beautiful Helps Clean Up Texas Waterways

The Texas Waterway Cleanup Program helps improve our state's water quality by supporting communities and

Keep Texas Beautiful

organizations with cleanups and litter prevention activities along freshwater waterways in their local areas.

Administered by Keep Texas Beautiful, this program

offers free cleanup supplies and coordinates waterway cleanups around the state. In 2009, the Texas Waterway Cleanup Program accomplished the following:

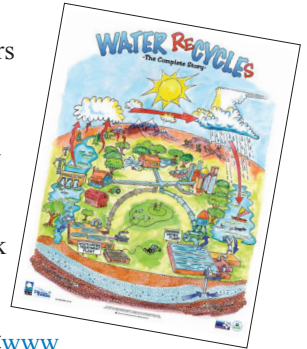
- 276 waterway cleanup events
- 16,614 total volunteers
- 979 miles of waterways cleaned
- 297 tons of litter removed

For more information or to find a cleanup near you, visit www.ktb.org.

Highlighted TCEQ Publications

Landowner's Guide to Plugging Abandoned Water Wells, RG-347, offers guidance on how to properly plug an abandoned water well.

Water Recycles Poster, GI-403, is a color poster (18" x 22") that illustrates steps in the water cycle and several human activities that affect water. The back of poster has narrative information on water as well as activities and puzzles.



To order TCEQ publications, visit www.tceq.state.tx.us/publications.

Take the Survey!

Did you know you can give the TCEQ feedback on the job we are doing? Well, you can and we want to hear from you.

The TCEQ Customer Satisfaction Survey gives you the opportunity to let us know about your experience working with the agency—if you prefer, you can give us your comments anonymously. We are seeking your feedback on how we can better serve our customers—from your overall satisfaction with the TCEQ to the courteousness and responsiveness of our staff to your opinion about our facilities. And if requested, we will send you a response to your specific comments or questions.

The TCEQ is committed to providing the highest quality customer service. We value your opinion on how we are doing and how we can improve. To make your opinion known, fill one out today. Go online at www.tceq.state.tx.us/goto/customersurvey, or to request a paper copy, call 800-687-4040.

Take Care of Texas Tips

At Home Buy Locally

Buying locally grown food supports the local economy, reduces refrigeration and transportation emissions, and lessens the need for packing materials. Buy Texas organic products that are produced by a farming system that relies on maintaining and replenishing the soil to grow crops without synthetic pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizers. Most farmers' markets and pick-your-own locations offer organic products. You might even discover a few fruits or vegetables you didn't even know were Texas grown. For locations in Texas, go to the Pick Texas Web site at www.picktexas.com.

Around the Office Try Composting



Try setting up a bin in the break room to collect coffee grounds, vegetable scraps, and fruit scraps. Instead of throwing out those scraps and leftovers with the garbage, recycle them by composting. Compost serves as a soil conditioner that can help improve landscaping and reduce water usage.

www.takecareoftexas.org